

Comparison Essay Assessment Rubric Title: _____ Author: _____ Pd: _____
IDEAS AND CONTENT (Development) 10/09ktm

5 Paper is clear & focused. It holds reader's attention. Relevant details & support enrich central theme.

- A. Topic is **narrow & manageable**. Thesis & argument are convincing. There is no **plot summary**.
- B. **Relevant, telling, quality details** give reader important information, **beyond obvious** or predictable.
- C. The writer seems to be writing from **knowledge** or **experience**; the ideas are **fresh** and **original**.
- D. The reader's questions are **anticipated and answered**.
- E. **Insight**—understanding of life & what is significant—shows high level performance (not required)
- F. **Support**—passages/quotes from text are used (and cited) for support, with little or no plot summary
- 3 The writer is beginning to define the topic, even though development is still basic or general.**
- A. **Topic is fairly broad**; but, direction is clear. Thesis & argument need revision. Some **plot summary**.
- B. **Support is attempted**, but doesn't go far enough in supporting topic sentences and thesis statement.
- C. Ideas **clear**, though may not be detailed, accurate, or expanded enough to show in-depth understanding.
- D. Writer draws on textual knowledge, but writing is too **general; not specific** enough in argument.
- E. The reader is **left with questions**. More information is needed to "fill in the blanks."
- F. **Support**—a less than adequate number of cited passages from text or weak writing in support of them.

1 Paper lacks clear sense of purpose or central theme. To extract meaning, reader must make inferences based on sketchy or missing details. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. Writer **still searching for topic**; may be confusion about **main idea**; writing is mostly **plot summary**.
- B. Information is **limited** or **unclear** or the **length is not adequate** for development.
- C. Ideas are not clear or developed. Few details are included.
- D. The writer has **not begun to define the topic** in a meaningful, personal way.
- E. **Everything seems as important as everything else**; reader struggles with what is important in essay.
- F. Paper is **repetitious**, or read like a **disconnected, random thoughts** with no discernable point.
- G. **Support**—passages/quotes from text are not used (and cited) to support argument

ORGANIZATION

5 The organization enhances and showcases the central idea or theme. The order, structure, or presentation of information is compelling and moves the reader through the text.

- A. A **thesis statement** outlines main argument of the essay occurs at **the end of the introduction**.
- B. An inviting **introduction**, a detailed **body**, & a satisfying **conclusion** make up the paper.
- C. **Topic sentences** head each supporting paragraph, and each **supports the thesis statement**.
- D. **Thoughtful transitions** clearly show how ideas connect.
- E. Argument is **logical and effective**; support is well **sequenced**, appropriately **elaborate**.
- F. The **title** is **original** and captures the central theme of the piece.
- G. Organization **flows so smoothly** the reader hardly thinks about it; structure suits **purpose**.

3 Organizational structure is strong enough to move reader through paper without too much confusion.

- A. **Thesis statement** is weak or not well-developed, does not explain main argument of the essay.
- B. Paper has **recognizable introduction with thesis, body, & conclusion**. Introduction (&/ thesis) may be undeveloped; the body may be poorly organized; conclusion may not resolve all issues raised in paper.
- C. Topic sentences are weak, do not support the thesis statement, are not proved in paragraphs.
- D. **Transitions often work well**; at other times, connections between ideas are fuzzy.
- E. **Sequencing** shows **some logic**, but not under control enough that support is consistent;
- F. **Pacing is controlled**, though writer may not dedicate enough time to essential parts of argument.
- F. A **title is present**, although it may be uninspired or an obvious restatement of the prompt or topic.
- G. **Organization sometimes supports the main point**; at other times, reader is aware of problems in **flow**.

1 Paper lacks a clear direction. Ideas, details, or support seem strung together in a loose or random fashion; there is no identifiable internal structure. The writing reflects more than one of these problems:

- A. There is no **thesis statement** outlining the main argument of the paper.
- B. No real **introduction** setting up argument; body too general; weak or no **conclusion** to wrap things up.
- C. Paragraphs are **not organized** under **topic sentences**. Or, topic sentences get **no support** in paragraphs.
- D. Connections between ideas are **confusing** or not even present. **Transitions** are needed.
- E. **Sequencing** needs work, argument is fragmentary and there is no clear thread of argument.
- F. **Pacing is awkward**; the writing slows to a crawl when reader wants to get on with it; or vice versa.
- F. **No title is present**; or if present, **does not match** well with the content.
- G. Problems with organization make it **hard for the reader to get a grip** on the main point or story line.

Ideas & Content Total: ____/5 + Organization Total: ____/5 = Total Score: ____/10

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